

Reducing Public Speaking Anxiety and Enhancing Communication through experiential learning among Nursing Students, SGT University, Gurugram

Nicky Tyagi^{1*}, Poonam Ahlawat², Jyoti Dahiya³

Author's Affiliation:

¹Department of Mental Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, SGT University, Gurugram (Haryana)-122505, India

²Associate Professor, Department of Mental Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, SGT University

³Assistant Professor, Department of Mental Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, SGT University

Correspondence author: Nicky Tyagi, Department of Mental Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, SGT University, Gurugram (Haryana)-122505, India
Nickytyagi54@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

Public speaking is an important skill for undergraduate students to learn and practice as they progress through their education and careers around the world. Public speaking anxiety can significantly impact nursing students in various ways, affecting their academic performance, professional development, and overall well-being. The objective was to give students the necessary skills required to make an effective presentation as well as to provide them with a chance to practice those skills. Sixty participants (30 in control group and 30 in experimental group) were selected using convenient sampling technique. The data was collected using The Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA; McCroskey, 1970). The findings revealed that there was significant improvement in communication skills which was evident from the paired T-test that showed a significant difference between the pretest and posttest PSA scores in the experimental group ($t(29) = 5.948, p < 0.001$), indicating that there was a significant change in PSA scores after the intervention. The paired T-test results show a non-significant difference between the pretest and post test PSA scores in the control group ($t(29) = 1.751, p = 0.09$), indicating that there was no significant change in PSA scores after the intervention. The research addressed a global issue professional often struggle with anxiety and poor speaking skills. By providing students with essential knowledge and specific techniques the study helped them to deliver effective presentations.

Keywords: Anxiety, Public speaking, Experiential learning, Nursing students.

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INTRODUCTION

As college students advance in their studies and jobs, public speaking is a crucial talent to

acquire and hone. The most prevalent kind of social phobia, public speaking anxiety, is thought to affect 15% to 30% of the general

population¹. Effective public speaking is essential for both career and academic success. Compared to their contemporaries, individuals possessing great communication skills are more likely to complete their university education and assume leadership roles².

Many people find public speaking to be a frightening experience, and studies have shown that more than two thirds of people worry about speaking in front of others. Speaking in front of an audience can be detrimental to those who suffer from public speaking anxiety in terms of both³.

Many people find public speaking to be a frightening experience, and studies have shown that more than two thirds of people worry about speaking in front of others. Speaking in front of an audience can be detrimental to a person's physical and mental health if they suffer from public speaking anxiety⁴. Students can better relate their learning to real-world situations by gaining experience via learning. Students should gain meaningful experiences from real-world situations that they may apply to their communication needs⁵.

Speaking in front of an audience can negatively affect a person's physical and mental health if they suffer from public speaking anxiety. Symptoms of anxiety related to public speaking can take many different forms, including physical feelings and illogical thinking⁶. Anxiety related to public speaking arises when a someone feels uncertain about their ability to manage the circumstance they are in, which leads to difficulty concentrating and restlessness. Numerous studies have demonstrated the complete opposite: an individual with low levels of public speaking fear and high levels of self-confidence⁷.

The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of ex[experiential learning in reducing public speaking anxiety.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Quantitative research approach was adopted in this study. The research design was Quasi-experimental. Sixty nursing students (30 in experimental and 30 in control group) were selected from GNM Nursing , Faculty of Nursing, SGT University using convenient sampling technique. Data was collected using tool that consisted of two parts, Part A: Socio-demographic data such as age, gender, religion, course, father occupation, mothers occupation, have you had any prior experience with public speaking or presentation, are you involved in any extracurricular activities and Part B: The Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA; McCroskey, 1970). It consisted of 34 statements and is scored on 5 point likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5. It is highly reliable (alpha estimates >.90) and it focuses strictly on public speaking anxiety. The data was collected after getting the formal permission from Dean of the respective faculty. After obtaining consent from the subjects the data was collected using standard questionnaire. The analysis was done using Descriptive and Inferential Statistics.

PROCEDURE

The presentation skills class was designed to introduce students to a systematic process for developing and giving presentations in. In particular, students were taught, in both one-on-one and seminar formats, how to prepare, practice, deliver, and reflect on a presentation. The class, in terms of length and scope, was similar to a typical presentation skills class. The presentation was done in the slots i.e small group and large group presentation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study are as following:

Table no 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of socio-demographic variables of study participants.

N=60

Demographic variables		Experimental (%)	Control (%)	Experimental (f)	Control (f)
Age	17-19 Years	7%	0%	2	0
	20-22 Years	57%	57%	17	17
	23-25 Years	30%	40%	9	12
	25 Years or above	7%	3%	2	1
Gender	Male	3%	0%	1	0
	Female	97%	100%	29	30
	Others	0%	0%	0	0
Religion	Hindu	90%	93%	27	28
	Muslim	7%	0%	2	0
	Christian	0%	0%	0	0
	Sikh	3%	7%	1	2
Course	Medical	100%	100%	30	30
	Paramedical	0%	0%	0	0
Fathers occupation	Government Job	17%	37%	5	11
	Private Job	47%	37%	14	11
	Business	23%	20%	7	6
	Unemployed	13%	7%	4	2
Mothers occupation	Government Job	3%	0%	1	0
	Private Job	10%	27%	3	8
	Business	0%	7%	0	2
	Unemployed	87%	67%	26	20
Prior experience with public speaking or presentations?	Yes	27%	57%	8	17
	No	73%	43%	22	13

Are you involved in any extracurricular activities?	Yes	80%	60%	24	18
	No	20%	40%	6	12

The findings of the study revealed that majority of participants in both the experimental and control groups are in the 20-22 years age range (57% in both groups). Most participants in both groups were female, with 97% in the experimental group and 100% in the control group. The majority of participants in both groups were Hindu (90% in the experimental group and 93% in the control group). All participants in both groups were from the medical course, indicating homogeneity in educational background. There were

differences in the distribution of mothers' occupations between the experimental and control groups, particularly in private jobs and unemployment. A higher percentage of participants in the control group (57%) have prior experience with public speaking or presentations compared to the experimental group (27%). A higher percentage of participants in the experimental group (80%) were involved in extracurricular activities compared to the control group (60%).

Table no.2 Frequency & Percentage distribution of Pre-Experimental and Pre-Control Group of Public Speaking Anxiety

CRITERIA MEASURE OF PSA SCORE		
CATEGORY SCORE	PRE EXPERIMENTAL	PRE CONTROL
HIGH(132-170)	2(6.7%)	1(3.3%)
MODERATE(98-131)	19(63.3%)	17(56.7%)
LOW(34-97)	9(30%)	12(40%)
Maximum=170 Minimum =34		

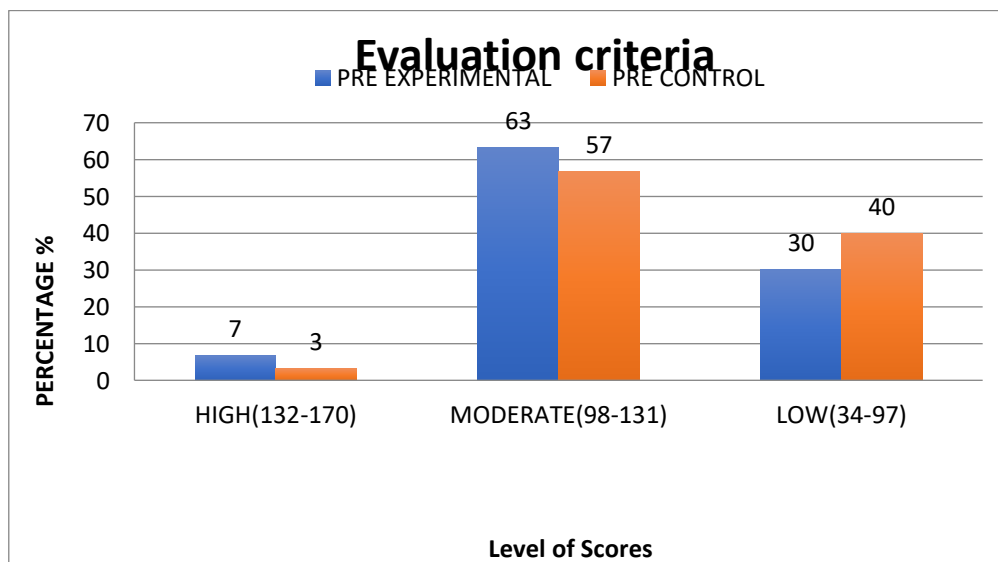


Fig no.1- PSA Scores in Pre-Experimental and Pre-Control group.

Table no.3: Showing Frequency & Percentage distribution of Post-Experimental and Post-Control Group of PSA Scores.

CRITERIA MEASURE OF PSA SCORE		
CATEGORY SCORE	POST EXPERIMENTAL	POST CONTROL
HIGH(132-170)	0(0%)	0(0%)
MODERATE(98-131)	3(10%)	13(43.3%)
LOW(34-97)	27(90%)	17(56.7%)
Maximum=170,Minimum=34		

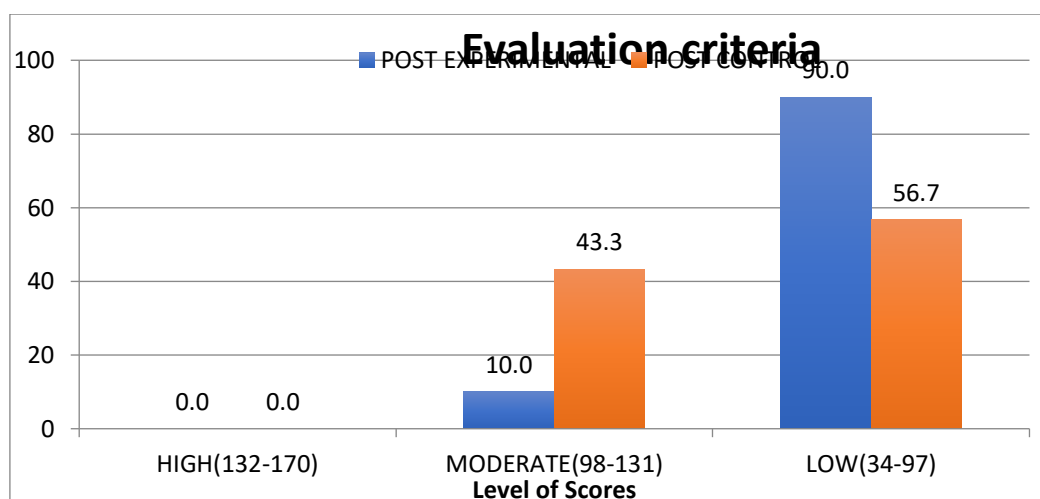


Fig no 2: PSA Scores in Post-Experimental and Post-Control group.

Table No 4. : Comparison within the Group with Paired & Unpaired T Test of PSA Scores

		PSA SCORE				Paired T Test		
		Pretest		Posttest				
Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	df	T	Result
Experimental Group	30	105.47	18.719	80.80	10.324	29	5.948	P value= <0.001 Significant
Control Group	30	95.100	19.007	85.40	24.899	29	1.751	P value=0.09 Non Significant
Unpaired T Test	df	58		df	58			
	T	2.128		T	0.935			
	Result	P value=0.038 Significant		Result	P value=0.354 Non Significant			
Maximum = 170 Minimum = 0								

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to test the effectiveness of experiential learning in

reducing students' PSA. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of participants in both groups had moderate PSA scores before the experiment. A smaller percentage of

participants in both groups had low PSA scores before the experiment. The findings were found congruent with the study done by (Pontillas, Marlon. (2020) that the majority of adults in the selected college in mangalore experience moderate levels of anxiety when it come to public speaking. The findings also revealed a significant difference between the pretest and posttest PSA scores in the experimental group ($t(29) = 5.948$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that there was a significant change in PSA scores after the intervention. The paired T-test results show a non-significant difference between the pretest and posttest PSA scores in the control group ($t(29) = 1.751$, $p = 0.09$), indicating that there was no significant change in PSA scores after the intervention. There were no participants with high PSA scores in either group after the experiment. A smaller percentage of participants in the experimental group had moderate PSA scores after the experiment compared to the control group. These findings were congruent with (Benita Selma Ferrao et.al 2023) where there were only two students of the population perceived that they still have a high anxiety level. There was no significant association between PSA scores and socio-demographic variables in the experimental group.

CONCLUSION

This research addressed a global issue: professionals often struggle with anxiety and poor speaking skills despite expertise. By providing students with essential knowledge, specific techniques, and ample practice opportunities, the study aimed to empower them to deliver effective presentations confidently, thus reducing anxiety.

FUNDING

No funding has been received and utilized for this research

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The study was approved by Research and development Cell of SGT University, Gurugram, Haryana.

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

The study, data collection and analysis, data interpretation, paper drafting and critical revision were equally done by all the authors

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